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ABSTRACT

The State/Local Cooperative Labor Market Information Program has been developed to meet the needs of California's business community and work force. The program aims to improve the match between employers' needs for skilled labor and the skills of the state's workers. The program is a partnership composed of the state Employment Development Department (EDD), state and local employment and training agencies, and employers. The partnership collects and analyzes local occupational data and prepares and disseminates annual reports. Various state agencies provide funding and advice. EDD determines program responsibilities, establishes research methods, provides the training and technical assistance to conduct the program, prepares employment projections, and conducts statewide and regional analyses. Local partners provide a forum for community participation to determine local information needs, conduct employer surveys, prepare analytical reports, and disseminate information. The information produced includes employers' views on the availability of trained workers, recruitment practices, qualifications needed, earnings and hours, advancement patterns, and short-term employment outlook. (KC)

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STATE/LOCAL

COOPERATIVE

LABOR MARKET INFORMATION

PROGRAM

Improving the match between the labor needs of employers and the skills of jobseekers by providing current localized occupational information for better labor market decisions.

May 1991

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OVERVIEW

The Mission

To meet the diverse needs of California's business community and workforce, the State Employment Development Department (EDD) has created the State/Local Cooperative Labor Market Information (LMI) Program. The Program's mission is to improve the match between employers' needs for skilled labor and the skills of the California workforce. This is accomplished by providing current localized occupational information which results in better labor market decisions. These decisions are made by jobseekers, employers, policy makers, legislators, training staff, students, educators, counselors, administrators and others who prepare people for, and help them to obtain, work.

Over the past 50 years, many federal and state laws dealing with education, employment and social welfare have called for closer alignment among training providers in meeting needs of employers. While these laws have established locally directed programs to address various social issues, adequate local information upon which to base program decisions has been limited. EDD's State/Local Cooperative LMI Program establishes a partnership for local and state agencies to work together to resolve this information gap cooperatively.

The Partnership

The Program is a partnership comprised of EDD, state and local employment and training agencies and employers. The partnership collects and analyzes local occupational data, and prepares and disseminates annual reports of these data.

In this cooperative effort, various state agencies provide funding and policy advice. EDD determines program responsibilities, establishes research methods, provides the tools, training and technical assistance to conduct the Program, prepares employment projections, and conducts statewide and regional analyses.

The local partner provides a forum for community participation to determine local information needs, conducts employer surveys, prepares analytical reports, and disseminates information to meet local needs.

The information produced includes employers' views on the availability of trained workers, recruitment practices, qualifications needed, earnings and hours, advancement patterns and short-term employment outlook.

BENEFITS

Vocational Program Planning

Vocational program administrators and planners, faced with the rapidly changing job market, can use timely localized labor market information to most effectively commit limited training resources.

Program Marketing

With reliable, locally-developed occupational data, schools and other local training providers can market their training programs more effectively. They can inform students, employers and other members of the community of the need for the program, and that the curriculum was developed through local labor market research.

Placement and Job Development

Knowing the qualifications employers are looking for in applicants enables public and private employment services and school placement offices to match available workers with appropriate jobs. Awareness of current labor market conditions, and where the jobs are in the local economy, allows job developers to target their efforts as well.

Curriculum Design

Changing and emerging occupations demand updated curricula design to prepare jobseekers with skills to effectively meet employers' needs. Good information from employers is essential in providing this match.

Human Resource Planning

Local labor market information enables employers to offer competitive wage and benefit compensation packages, an important factor in hiring and retaining qualified workers.

Career Counseling

An understanding of changing job requirements, emerging occupations, prevailing wages and supply/demand data makes effective career choices easier.

Economic Development

Information on employment outlook and the availability and cost of trained local labor assists employers and economic development agencies in planning growth, business relocation and redevelopment.

OBJECTIVES

Produce Reliable Occupational Information

The Program uses tested methods combined with a strong partnership between state labor market analysts and the local partners to ensure that the occupational information will be reliable, credible and useful.

Achieve Cost-Efficient Production

Increasing demands for local labor market information, combined with limits on available resources, place more and more importance on the need to produce data efficiently. EDD's State/Local Program accomplishes this by using automated systems, standardized procedures, and coordinated efforts of state and local participants.

Meet Varied Local Needs for LMI

Local participation involves all members of the employment training, education and economic development communities. Included are Job Training Partnership Act (JPTA) service delivery areas and Private Industry Councils, county welfare departments, employers, community colleges, regional occupational centers/programs, other local training providers, economic development agencies and other local government agencies. Such local involvement ensures that the data collected meet the needs of users in the community.

STATE LOCAL COOPERATIVE LABOR MARKET INFORMATION LMI PROGRAM

Reduce Duplication of Efforts

By coordinating the collection of labor market information for state and local agencies, redundant efforts are avoided and employers are not burdened with similar inquiries.

Distribute Information Effectively

Equally important is extensive dissemination and use of the data among all vocational education, employment training, counseling and placement organizations at state and local levels. Local participation in developing labor market information increases users' confidence in the data and ensures wide distribution and use of the information.

"Users find the occupational reports to be succinct and readable, and to contain timely and reliable occupational information."

Applied Management & Planning Group,
in their evaluation of the Program, 1991

PROCESS

Employment Projections

EDD prepares five-year projections of local occupational employment and provides these to local partners in the State/Local Cooperative LMI Program. These projections show the latest employment trends, the expected number of job openings resulting from growth and labor market separations, and the industries that employ each occupation.

Identification of Local Needs

Using the projections and other indicators of occupational growth, local agencies in education, employment training and economic development jointly select the occupations for which better labor market information is needed, and determine the types of information needed.

Employer Surveys

EDD works with each local partner to design questionnaires for each occupation selected. Standard questions and locally unique questions are asked to satisfy local informational needs. The local partner then conducts the survey according to standards which ensure that the information collected is valid and complete.

Occupational Analysis

The data collected from employers are computer-tabulated by EDD and analyzed by the local partner. The local partner also analyzes information from trade associations, employment agencies, licensing agencies and unions, as appropriate, to prepare a local report on each occupation studied. EDD prepares regional and statewide analyses on these occupations.

Effective Dissemination

The occupational analyses are disseminated to employment and training planners, administrators, educators, counselors, employers and other users of labor market information. The process of providing information includes workshops, planning meetings, printed reports, and responses to ad hoc requests.

"Local Partners are committed to the Program . . . . (It) is flexible and adaptable to local needs."

Applied Management & Planning Group,
in their evaluation of the Program, 1991

RESULTS

Wages and Fringe Benefits

Wage, tip and commission data are produced for entry-level and experienced employees. In addition, common benefits offered to full-time and part-time employees in the occupation are described.

Hiring Requirements

The importance of specific qualifications, such as certification, licensing, education, training and experience requirements, and job skills for job entry are rated by employers for each occupation.

Job Characteristics

Employers' recruitment practices, number of hours worked, the extent of shift work and unionization, the industries employing the occupation and turnover are some of the topics covered.

Advancement

The number of people promoted in the occupation and the possible career paths are identified.

STATE LOCAL COOPERATIVE LABOR MARKET INFORMATION LMI PROGRAM

Job Outlook

Supply/demand information describes the degree of difficulty employers have finding applicants who meet their hiring standards, and what this means to jobseekers. The employment projections provide a longer-term view of employment potential.

And More...

A variety of additional information can be provided, depending on the informational needs of each local community. This includes equipment/tools provided by the employer, evaluation or probationary periods, employer-recommended training programs, qualification periods for obtaining health benefits, on-the-job training programs, flexible work schedules, overtime and holiday compensation, seasonal employment levels and much more!

FUTURE

The Vision

EDD's State/Local Cooperative LMI Program will be available in all labor market areas and to all public and private agencies where employment, training, and career decisions are made.

Information generated by the Program will be integrated with local and statewide planning for vocational education, employment training and economic development.

The Program will be recognized as the primary source for local and statewide occupational information.

"To cooperate with others in accomplishing a task is one of our nobler achievements. The whole really is greater than the sum of its parts."

Philip B. Crosby
Quality Is Free

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